The finished poles for the framework, !ha/nagu, are sunk in the earth vertically, making a circle with a diameter of 3 and 1/2 to 5 meters. They use from 20 to 60 poles, depending on the size of the hut. The upright parts form the framework for the walls and the thin curved ends the framework for the roof. The whole structure looks like a beehive. The finished framework looks like a wide-meshed woven net. It is about 2 and 1/2 meters high on the average. [229] Wherever the poles meet or cross, they are tied together with thongs or bast strings. The poles with a flat arc which go into the ground at a sharp angle and form the lower part of the wall are specially designated as *!na/nihaigu. There are usually four pairs of these. Larger huts sometimes are given necessary support by a pole the thickness of an arm which is sunk upright into the ground in the middle of the hut and supports the middle of the roof. The Bechuan hut also has this feature. Correspondingly it is called *≠gurihaib or kχã!nab, also */naĕhaib, because it stands in the "navel" of the hut. The men build the framework of the hut.

b) The mats which form the roof and walls are made by the women. The material for making the mats is furnished by a reed grass, usually called rush, a Mariscus species, of the Cyperus genus from stalks glistening with fat and therefore called /hu- mi·haru s by the Hottentots. The plant is abundant in watery places. [Picture. Cyperus, Reed for a Mat Hut.] [Picture. Bone Needle for Sewing Mats. a) side view, b) full view. 2/3 natural size.]

The reeds are pulled out one by one (not cut) and put aside until dried.

Piercing and hemming (kχu·iam or *kχu·im) a mat requires a great deal of work. The woman sits in the manner described earlier (cf. p. 181) on a skin on the ground. The mat she is making lies in front of her, irregularly rolled up. She takes about 20 reeds from a loose heap, which is piled up beside her, places the bundle in front of her feet, adds the new reeds to those already bound. The toes of her right foot hold the reeds in the desired position on the ground while she is doing this. To sew the reeds together she uses a bone needle, */kχa·ru nã·b, made from a rib or a leg bone. The woman holds the threaded bone needle with her left hand and with her right she pushes 3 to 5 reeds at a time over the point to that they are pierced through. [230] Then the speared reeds are drawn off the needle onto the bast thread and added to the ones already in a row.*

*In Little Namaland I saw that the mats are not pierced by the threaded needle but by a